

## A Critical Analysis of the Ethics of Marketing Used By Publius According To Various Ethical Theories

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to analyse the ethics of marketing used by Publius using various ethical theories. It is concluded that certain important aspects of ethics seems to be ignored by Utilitarianism. According to Justice and the consideration of Rights, until marketers of Publius publicly state their stand, there is no way user of Publius software will be safe, escape censorship or even be brought to court if he or she is caught by the relevant repressive government authorities who really mean business. Creators of Publius should not in any way suggest or act to say that no one can censor or track down the user. They can be traced and traced to the original users. In this way, people will not be disillusioned when they discover that the repressive governments or authorities can still track down on the users, perhaps not instantly, but surely in due time. Perhaps some technology could be made to spot-check on the misuse of such software and the criminals brought to court, like introducing parallel user-checks on the criminals, child abusers, hackers, terrorists or the email virus-punks. It is true that this Publius could fall into the wrong hands, especially the perpetrators of crimes – terrorists, child pornographers, hackers, cyber attackers – and the military-led governments. Henceforth, clear terms and conditions should be properly stated and printed for their understandings and use. At the same time, software, running in tandem with this software programme might greatly help to track down those abusers of this software. Once alerted, they should be immediately channelled to the relevant authorities to have them prosecuted in court.

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### I. Introduction

#### 1.1 Ethical theory of Utilitarianism

First, considering the ethical theory of Utilitarianism (Adams, 1976; Anscombe, 1958; Bayles, 1968; Goodin, 2010; Rosen, 2003), as expounded by Jeremy Bentham (1742-1832) (Bentham, 2001, 2009), his principle is that whatever course of action that maximizes benefits over costs, the greatest benefit with the least cost, for all concerned is right and good from the ethical view-point, especially for all who are affected. In this context, many are of the view that the best way of evaluating the ethical propriety of a business decision, like marketing of Publius software programme, is to rely on “utilitarian cost-benefit analysis.” This is in contrast to the maximum benefits over cost for the individuals alone, a view held by the Egoistics (Hobbs, 1998). Hence, the marketing used by Publius is ethical from the altruistic point of view, especially if it maximizes benefits over cost for all who will use it and if it has done its benefits over cost analysis. On the contrary, if people decide to use it for their own selfish gains, hope to get away with their criminal acts, then, it is advisable that this marketing by Publius should not be done at all or more crimes would be committed.

#### 1.2 Rights view-point

Considering the Rights view-point, many people could be using the Publius software without their consent or that it was less safe than they might have expected. In the end, it all boils down to the time factor, that the user could be censored, tracked, and even brought to court to face jurisdiction. If the user had learnt of the problem, he or she could have made a decision first whether to embark on this slippery challenge of being tracked down and severely punished or jailed for doing a good cause, as there is no warranty to state that he would not be caught while in the internet web. Thus, we can see that AT & T Publius, by not informing people of the consequences, it is depriving one of his or her right to use that software. Here, the individual’s entitlement to freedom of choice and well-being is also not clearly spelt out. He or she is using it at his or her own peril.

#### 1.3 Justice or fairness

Next, considering the justice or fairness of the matter, it is important for the user of Publius software to be clearly informed of the whole process of the message transmission that is being sent out, say, from the computer, through the internet web to the receiver so that he or she knows what is going on, what to expect in the event of his being tracked, censored or even brought to face judgement in court. He or she should not be led

to think that he or she would not be caught in the process of transmitting of his or her message across to the other party. The distribution of burdens and benefits to the user is not clearly defined too. Whether one likes it or not, there is no way one can escape from the deep scrutiny of all the repressive governments' eyes as they have the technical experts to track down all their so called "offenders" and have them brought to jail.

#### **1.4 Notion of Caring**

Considering the notion of Caring, marketers of Publius should try their best to ensure that their customers know what they can and cannot do, under the ethical code of conduct, so as not to be censored by the repressive authorities who are merciless and serious in their business of ensuring that no one tries to create public discord and disunity in their country.

In conclusion, we can see that certain important aspects of ethics seems to be ignored by Utilitarianism (Bentham, 2001, 2009). Take for instance, the consideration of Justice and the consideration of Rights where, and until marketers of Publius publicly state their stand, there is no way user of Publius software will be safe, escape censorship or even be brought to court if he or she is caught by the relevant repressive government authorities who really mean business. Creators of Publius should not in any way suggest or act to say that no one can censor or track down the user. They can be traced and traced to the original users. In this way, people will not be disillusioned when they discover that the repressive governments or authorities can still track down on the users, perhaps not instantly, but surely in due time. Perhaps some technology could be made to spot-check on the misuse of such software and the criminals brought to court, like introducing parallel user-checks on the criminals, child abusers, hackers, terrorists or the email virus-punks.

## **II. Secondary Findings**

It is an ethical question whether the creators of Publius were in any way morally responsible for any criminal acts that criminals may be able to carry out or keep secrets by relying on Publius. Another question is whether AT & T was in any way morally responsible for these.

#### **2.1 Two sides of a moral situation**

Any technology or an invention can be misused. The moral of a good story can have two sides. So is a coin. There are more often two sides to an event. One is when you are optimistic and the other is when you are pessimistic. If one can think of a technology that can benefit people, then one can also consider its darker side that can harm them as well. Take, for example, the invention of the aeroplane by the Wright Brothers (About Education, 2015). On the one hand, their inventions had greatly shortened the travel time between two countries while at the same time, it could have many innocent people killed when the aeroplane they are flying in suddenly exploded in the mid-air on its journey back.

The Publius is a great innovative technology where unauthorized editing of your document is literally made impossible. We truly believe that AT & T is in no way responsible for any misuse of their technology. Its creators of Publius meant it for the general good of the public. Their ideal purpose is for the "ordinary folk" who is in China, standing helplessly as he observes his own people being abused daily by the government. What started as an ideal for a person might backfire if the software falls into the hands of criminals, hackers, child pornographers, email virus punks. Instant spot-checks running in connection with the Publius software should be in place to ensure that this in force to prevent any misuse of the software program.

#### **2.2 Stand of the Traditional Utilitarianism**

Now, considering the stand of the Traditional Utilitarianism (Bentham, 2001, 2009) which states that an action is right from an ethical point of view – on condition that the sum total of utilities produced by that act is greater than the sum total of utilities produced by any other act – that a person could have done in its place. Here, we can see that AT & T is morally right in inventing a new software that promotes goodness to mankind in the process but it is not morally responsible for any criminal acts that could be carried out or kept them as secrets when they use this Publius software programme. Many good citizens who use this software will reap the many benefits that it provides without the fear of being tracked and being dragged to court.

The contrary of the adverse outcome could also happen when one applies the Duty or Rule-based approach (Kant, 1967), re-assessment on moral reasoning. Here, morality is deemed as a kind of "higher law," equating it to the model of legal reasoning. In this instance, AT & T's production of Publius software inevitably makes it responsible for any criminal acts that people might commit, in particular, the criminals who might use it to deceive young innocent teenagers to their traps, causing great harm and damage to their innocent lives, or who might use it to hack document files and programmes. An autocratic government might use it to abuse its citizens for its own agenda. Genuine users might also face censorship of their messages sent to innocent people residing in the repressive countries. The terrorists, for example, the Islamist terrorists group, could probably use it to deceive young teenagers to join its organization for a "good cause," when in fact, it is out to do more havoc.

They literally prepare them to be human bombs in crowded place, in the process killing many innocent lives when their bombs are activated.

#### **2.4 Jeremy Bentham's theory**

According to Jeremy Bentham (Bentham, 2001, 2009), he focused on a person's interior motives for what they set out to do, not expecting any consequences as he shares that only goodwill is good and no others besides it. He further stipulated that people have moral rights, whether there is benefits provided or the costs it imposed on others, though he is doubtful that Utilitarianism, can give a good basis for those moral rights conferred. Notwithstanding, one can see the moral duty of the creators of Publius software programme to be responsible for their creations that they would bring into the market.

One is aware that new technologies and systems, too, have their teething problems. Hence, there is an urgent need to suppress these darker sides of technological developments. That said, unless the creators of Publius software or the AT & T can come up with programmes that can run in tandem with this Publius programme so that they immediately detect any misuse by criminals, hackers, terrorists, or email virus-punks that are out to create havoc and harm to the innocent people, they would be accountable for all other users who would use it for their own selfish gains. Concurrently, it should also be able to detect email-virus and child molestations as well. One should get the freedom to express oneself but should not be allowed to play with other people's sentiments in the name of freedom of speech.

#### **2.5 The US government versus Publius**

It is a question whether the US government should allow the implementation of Publius. The US government and many other democratic countries as well, should allow the implementation of Publius as it is a channel to voice one's opinion without being censored or tracked down so easily by the authorities. We are aware that the majority of the autocratic, socialistic or communist governments would not be willing to allow Publius to be implemented because they would not want to let the world know that they are not what they portray themselves to be on TV. TV news channels and other means of information of a country are well influenced and monitored by its government.

As such, a country's media will not broadcast what its government does not want it to show to its own country and also to the rest of the world. By allowing Publius to be implemented, they would immediately invite criticisms and upheavals from its people who for a long while have no avenues for recourse. A fear of massive public protests, harassment and being exposed would force the repressive governments to behave unjustly towards its people and to other countries as well. The governments, instead of trying to intrude into the author's documents to censor, suppress and ban public confrontations, would rather force the author or the writer to change his documents himself.

The U.S. government, has in its human rights constitution, under Article 19, clearly spelt out the sacred rights of every individual to freedom of expression. It also includes freedom to seek, receive and impart information, ideas of all kinds, orally or in writing or in print. The exercise of the rights in paragraph 2 carries with it special duties and responsibilities.

Hence, we see that the government is in favour of any new innovations that seek to promote freedom of speech. This new innovation, Publius software programme, also meant for that purpose, is certainly a timely and useful tool for the web user to encrypt their files, have it fragmented into many parts, just like a jigsaw puzzle, and then in stored in different servers stationed in different parts of the world so as to avoid examination, censoring and tracking of the originator of that file, anyone, the government, court official, attempting to identify it would find it very difficult to do so. However, in Article 20, any propaganda for war shall be prohibited by law, including any advocacy of national hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law also.

Besides, privacy is also a fundamental human rights recognized in the UN Declaration of Human Rights and hence, what is good, acceptable and which helps to protect the freedom of speech for human beings should be exercised and allowed for their use, in particular, the quick implementation of Publius software. Many people who have been living under autocratic and militarily-led governments will soon get to hear, see and be informed of their present situations which are always hidden from the public view, the truths is not shown to the public at all. People, on learning of their dire state and on knowing that there people out there who would be supporting them, might even pluck up courage to stand up and fight for their rights.

Again, applying the ethical theory of Utilitarianism (Bentham, 2001, 2009; Kant, 1967), where it states that the proper course of action is that which maximize a positive effect on a person, for example, "happiness", "welfare" or "personal preference." Bentham (2001, 2009), in his school of thought "A Fragment on Government" postulates that "it is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is important", not just for anyone person. Hence, we can safely say that when the U.S. government allows the implementation of Publius software, it will produce a snowball effect and many users, including the recipients will benefit greatly from its release. On the other hand, many, too, are fearful that this Publius software might fall onto wrong hands, like,

the criminals, the hackers, the terrorists, or the email virus-punks. They also will want to use it for their evil and sinful agendas, thereby causing grievous harm and damage to our society. In this instance, perhaps it would be appropriate to have an additional software running in tandem with this Publius software to audit-check on the user's misuse of this programme. It should immediately alert the authorities to pursue them. Family members, especially, the naïve, young teenagers would not be trapped into their deceptions and be used as human bombs to kill many innocent lives. Or their young daughters could be misled into child pornography for their own selfish gains.

### **III. Implications**

Every day, one needs to build ethical principles of good habits – speaking truthfully, no stealing, treating others well – knowing that others will do likewise, too. These are parts of Ethics which when practised daily will definitely make us a better person with good characters. When we consider the thoughts about Ethics, there are probably many myths about it.

First, it is about Business Ethics. It is generally believed that there is no notion of Business Ethics. Rather, it is the Principle of Ethics that exists in every aspect of our lives. An example, “Thou shalt not steal nor covet “my neighbour’s things.” Basically, I should not steal. This truth can be applied to my personal life, not taking anything from my neighbour’s and applying it further in my working life, not stealing anything from my boss’ office. People have to be taught first the purpose of this Publius software. It was invented for a good cause and it is not to be abused but rather to be used wisely.

Next, Personal Ethics is different from Professional Ethics. Aristotle’s proclamation of one’s character is the sum total of all our habits. If we lie daily, there is no way we can build or strengthen our character to withstand testing. This persistent lying will also creep into our business life situations, making us too weak to stand up for the truth or resist the temptations to be always honest in our business transactions. Before anyone proceeds to use this Publius software, one must be told to use it professionally, not haphazardly. It is invented for a very good cause.

Following that, the notion that some things are ethical whereas some are not. This is true if no human interaction is involved. A good example would be the auditing work that has to be done by an auditor for an organization. Initially, the work might appear only technical and without any ethical content. However, delving deeper into the work, one could find that it is technical and ethical as well. This auditor is paid by his company to do an honest job, anything less is deemed as stealing from his company.

Just like a “watch-dog”, the auditor has to ensure that the auditing work, reports and recommendations are accurate, truthful and there are honest disclosures made by all the directors concerned. Shareholders and investors well-beings in that organization must be included to ensure that everybody receives a fair treatment. Here, one could also be considered to be stealing from the investors if the auditor does not attempt to maximize their wealth. Inventors of this Publius software had noble aims when they set out to create it. It was built with the “freedom” of the individual’s speech in mind. Let the users who are going to use it be informed that they must use it with ethical mind-sets and not for any other reasons.

Next is the notion that Ethics is a matter of Education, (Dr. J Edward Ketz), alone. Indeed, education plays an important role in educating one about ethical responsibilities, though education alone does not produce ethical people. Some highly educated people are not ethical in their thoughts and behaviour. It has been found that education with enforcement will make a person behave more ethically. Teaching people first the correct usage of the Publius software is the initial step to ensure that they know how to use it correctly. Subsequently, they will be told of their ethical responsibilities, consequences and penalties should they fail to comply with their procedures.

### **IV. Conclusion**

It is true that this Publius could fall into the wrong hands, especially the perpetrators of crimes – terrorists, child pornographers, hackers, cyber attackers – and the military-led governments. Henceforth, clear terms and conditions should be properly stated and printed for their understandings and use. At the same time, another software, running in tandem with this software programme might greatly help to track down those abusers of this software. Once alerted, they should be immediately channelled to the relevant authorities to have them prosecuted in court.

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